

Paul ready to battle Department of Commerce *Has legislation ready to combat Commerce's proposed anti-shrimping rule* FOR
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WASHINGTON, DC - With the Department of Commerce threatening a new rule which will hurt shrimpers in the name of the radical environmental agenda, US Representative Ron Paul (R-Surfside, Texas) on Tuesday said he has legislation ready to take on those plans.

The rule, referred to officially as "Amendment 9 to the Shrimp Fisheries Management Plan," would have a significantly adverse impact on American shrimpers as it requires large capital expenditure on "Red Snapper Bycatch Reduction Devices." Further, these devices will reduce the total harvest of shrimpers, costing them more than just the initial outlay for the devices. Paul wrote a letter on Tuesday to all his fellow Members of Congress, informing them of his intention to take-on the rule if the Department of Commerce moves forward. The Department of Commerce promulgates the rules proposed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. The Secretary of Commerce is not required to promulgate the rules recommended by the council. Requests by Representative Paul and other Members of Congress that the secretary decline the rule has apparently been disregarded.

In accordance with Section 251 of the Contract with America Advancement Act of 1996, Congress is able to review of agency rule-making and overturn those rules it finds are unfair, misguided or detrimental.

"I believe that balance, fairness and scientific quality must be the guideposts for all fishery management measures, and these important factors are absent from this rule," Paul wrote in the letter to his colleagues on Tuesday.

After distributing the letter, Paul said the economic impact of the rule will be felt not just in his Gulf Coast district, but throughout the region and the nation, as the cost of shrimping increases.

"This kind of rule caters to the extreme environmental, anti-business agenda of the radical liberal-left," he said. "We need to be cutting these kinds of onerous rules and regulations, not

increasing them. The American people want a stop to these senseless rules which hurt small, family-owned businesses. It's the little guy running a shrimping business, as well as the American consumer, who will be injured by this rule."

In his letter to his colleagues, Paul also pointed out that this anti-shrimping measure will be difficult for the Coast Guard to enforce. The Coast Guard is charged with enforcing Department of Commerce's fishing rules.

"During the August break, my staff met with Coast Guard Officers who are tasked by the Department with enforcement of these laws. They stated that they were never asked about their capabilities to enforce fisheries laws and are already overburdened in this requirement," he wrote.

While the rule has not been officially "published," meaning the rule is in effect, it could be as soon as Wednesday, Sept. 17. Paul wrote that he has the legislation ready to go "the moment the rule is finalized."